

Kate Goodman
Portland
LD 1351

Sen. Carney and Rep. Kuhn and members of the Joint Standing Committee of the Judiciary, My name is Kate Goodman and I am a resident of Portland, Maine. I am a Jewish Mainer and educator and I am writing to oppose LD 1351.

I support efforts to address anti-semitism under the Maine Human Rights Act, but I disagree with the adoption of the International Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of anti-semitism.

The IHRA definition of antisemitism conflates criticism of Israel and Zionism with antisemitism. This would greatly infringe upon free speech and our collective ability to hold governments, like Israel, accountable. Indeed, the weaponization of antisemitism has been shown to intensify discrimination and exclusion of vulnerable communities in the United States, including Jews.

There are alternative definitions for antisemitism that I would ask the committee to consider instead. The Jerusalem Declaration on Antisemitism clearly distinguishes between antisemitism and legitimate criticism of Israeli policies.

I am writing because I care deeply about combating antisemitism and the protection of free speech in the state of Maine.

Please vote not to pass LD 1351. Maine deserves a framework that combats antisemitism without suppressing voices of or experiences of those living under oppression.

Thank you,
Kate Goodman